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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/810,938	03/26/2004	Christopher L. Nutley	19013-2	9884

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EXAMINER

SIPOS, JOHN

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3721

DATE MAILED: 03/10/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/810,938	Applicant(s) NUTLEY ET AL.	
	Examiner John Sipos	Art Unit 3721	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-25 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 24 and 25 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ |

RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

Group I. Claims 1-23, drawn to a packaging method and apparatus, classified in Class 53, subclass 448.

Group II. Claims 24 and 25, drawn to a folding plow assembly, classified in Class 493,

The inventions are distinct, each from the other, because of the following reasons:

The inventions of Groups *I* and *II* are related as **combination and subcombination**. A restriction requirement is based on the presumption that all claims of record define patentable inventions. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for its presumed patentability and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations. (See MPEP 806.06(c)). In the instant case, a comparison of combination claims 1, 11 and 14 and subcombination claim 24 provides evidence that the combination, as claimed, does not require the particulars of the subcombination, as claimed, for its presumed patentability.

Subcombination claim 24 sets forth the specific structure of the plow assembly. The combination claims do not set forth these particulars and, consequently, do not require them for patentability.

Even if other combination claims *do* set forth these particulars, distinction between the *inventions* is shown if any one combination claim does not include the particulars of any one subcombination claim. The presence of the particulars in other combination claims indicates that they *may be* included as part of the combination, but the claims selected above provide evidence that the particulars are not *required*. (See MPEP 806.05(c), Example 3.) The subcombinations

have separate utility because each can be used in packaging operations without the rest of the combination.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above, and because they have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classifications, restriction for examination purposes, as indicated, is proper.

Applicant is advised that the response to this requirement, to be complete, must include an election of the invention to be examined even if the restriction requirement is traversed.

During a telephone conversation between Examiner John Sipos and Mr. E. M. Robbins, attorney of record in this case, on 3/7/05 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I comprising claims 1-23. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in responding to this Office action. Claims 24 and 25 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner as being drawn to a non-elected invention. (See 37 CFR 1.142(b)). An action on the merits of the elected claims follows.

Applicant is reminded that, upon cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the **inventorship must be amended** in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a diligently filed petition under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(h). Applicant should further **amend the title**, in necessary, to reflect the elected invention.

REJECTIONS OF CLAIMS BASED ON PRIOR ART

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. ' 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

Claims 1,2,5-12,14-16,18-20 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. ' 102(b) as being anticipated by the patent to Hoffman (3,530,640). The patent to Hoffman shows various embodiments for packaging a plurality of article in a container by feeding a plurality of articles on a conveyor (for example 201 in the embodiments of Figures 2 and 8), aligning them by the side channels, pushing the articles by a ram 307 onto a container blank, pushing the articles and the container down by a ram 423 into a channel 603 that has vertical deflector sides that fold the container around the articles and finally moving the articles and the containers by an exit conveyor 501 at the bottom of the channel.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. ' 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 3,4,13,17,21 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. ' 103(a) as being unpatentable over the patent to Hoffman (3,530,640).

The use of prepasted container blanks (claims 3 and 4), vacuum pickup and transfer mechanism (claim 17) and further general packaging mechanisms (claim 22) are well known in the art and the Examiner takes official notice that their use is common knowledge in the packaging art. In the above cases the modification of the Hoffman operation would have been obvious to one skilled in the art for the known benefits of each modification. For example, prepasting assures the sealing of a container and eliminates the need for subsequent gluing mechanisms; vacuum pickup ensures positive control of the articles during transfer and further wrapping and palletizing ensures better protection of the articles.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES CITED

The cited prior art is made of record but has not been relied upon in the rejection of claims. However, the prior art is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure in that shows the use of a vertical channel for folding a blank around a group of articles.

The patents to Hottendorf, Marshall and Ullman show prepasted container blanks used in packaging machines wherein the articles and container are fed into a vertical channel..

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR

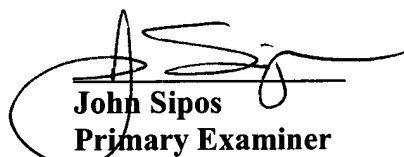
Art Unit: 3721

system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to **Examiner John Sipos** at telephone number **571-272-4468**. The examiner can normally be reached from 6:30 AM to 4:00 PM Monday through Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. Rinaldi Rada, can be reached at **571-272-4467**.

The **FAX** number for Group 3700 of the Patent and Trademark Office is **(703) 872-9306**.



John Sipos
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3721

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